

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims, and replaces all earlier version and listings.

1. to 16. (canceled).

17. (currently amended) A sticker printing apparatus for printing a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid on a display screen, comprising:

selection means for selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using ~~said~~ the touch panel;

background image display means for displaying on the display screen a background image corresponding to the background pattern selected by said selection means and storing, in a predetermined storage, the background image as one of a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order;

input means for inputting, by using ~~said~~ the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on a sticker, each of said plurality of character strings being assigned to each of ~~[[a]] the plurality of logical layers which overlay each other in a fixed order;~~

control means for generating ~~[[bit]] a set of bitmap~~ image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the ~~[[bit]] bitmap~~ image data in ~~[[a]] the~~ predetermined storage, each time a character string is inputted by said input means;

layout means for laying out each of the stored ~~[[bit]] sets of bitmap~~ image data in accordance with said fixed order;

generating means for generating image data by overlaying each of the sets of image data obtained by said layout means on the background image;

edit means for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using said touch panel with regard to image data obtained by said generating means, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with said fixed order; and

output means for, when an output instruction is inputted by using said touch panel, outputting the image data, obtained by said generating means or said edit means, to printing means.

18. (canceled)

19. (original) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said input means comprises:

means for displaying predetermined sample character strings on the display screen;

means for selecting a character string from the displayed sample character strings by using the touch panel;

means for setting the touch panel as character input means; and

means for displaying a virtual keyboard for character input operation when the touch panel is set as character input means.

20. (original) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said input means comprises means for setting a character design.

21. (previously presented) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the sticker has a form corresponding to a senjafuda, the form consisting of a header (kashira), a main body, and an insertion portion (sashifuda), and

wherein said input means inputs respective character strings for the header (kashira), main body, and insertion portion (sashifuda).

22. (original) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said printing means prints plural stickers on one sheet.

23. (previously presented) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising setting means for setting whether or not to insert the insertion portion (sashifuda) into the form,

wherein in a case that the setting means sets to insert the insertion portion (sashifuda) into the form, a part of the stickers in one sheet are printed with the insertion portion (sashifuda) inserted into the form.

24. (original) The sticker printing apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising:

memory means for storing data inputted by said input means; and

designation means for designating to return to an input subject for changing already-inputted data,

wherein in a case where said designation means designates to return to an input subject, contents stored in said memory means are used as a default setting of the input subject.

25. (currently amended) A control method of a sticker printing apparatus for printing a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid on a display screen, comprising:

a selection step of selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using ~~said~~ the touch panel;

a background image display step of displaying on the display screen a background image corresponding to the background pattern selected ~~[[by]]~~ in said selection step and storing, in a predetermined storage, the background image as one of a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order;

an input step of inputting, by using ~~said~~ the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on a sticker, each of ~~said~~ the plurality of character strings being assigned to ~~each a respective on~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the plurality of logical layers ~~which overlay each other in a fixed order;~~

a control step of generating ~~[[bit]]~~ a set of bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in ~~[[a]]~~ the predetermined storage, each time a character string is inputted in said input step;

a layout step of laying out each of the stored ~~[[bit]]~~ sets of bitmap image data in accordance with ~~said~~ the fixed order;

a generating step of generating image data by overlaying each of the sets of image data obtained ~~[[by]]~~ in said layout step on the background image;

an editing step of, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using said touch panel with regard to image data obtained in said generating step, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with the fixed order;
and

an output step of, when an output instruction is inputted by using the touch panel, outputting the image data, obtained in said generating step, to a printing unit.

26. (currently amended) A storage medium storing program codes to serve as a sticker printing apparatus, which prints a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid on a display screen, said program codes having functions including:

selection means for selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using ~~said~~ the touch panel;

background image display means for displaying on the display screen a background image corresponding to the background pattern selected by said selection means and storing, in a predetermined storage, the background image as one of a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order;

input means for inputting, by using ~~said~~ the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on a sticker, each of said plurality of character strings being assigned to each of ~~[[a]] the plurality of logical layers which overlay each other in a fixed order;~~

control means for generating ~~[[bit]]~~ a set of bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in

[[a]] the predetermined storage, each time a character string is inputted by said input means;

layout means for laying out each of the stored [[bit]] sets of bitmap image data in accordance with said fixed order;

generating means for generating image data by overlaying each of the sets of image data obtained by said layout means on the background image;

edit means for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using said touch panel with regard to image data obtained by said generating means, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with said fixed order; and

output means for, when an output instruction is inputted by using said touch panel, outputting the image data, obtained by said generating means or said edit means, to printing means.

27. (currently amended) An apparatus for printing a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid on a display screen, comprising:

start-up means for initiating start-up operation from a read-only storage medium which stores an operating system (OS);

preliminary processor means for ~~rewriting data, copying data, which is stored in the storage medium and is subject~~[[ed]] to being written in secondary volatile storage means at least while the OS is operating, to ~~predetermined data based on the storage medium, said secondary volatile storage means~~ that have a filing system and are being accessible by a CPU in a first stage of each start-up and having a file system;

means for initiating the OS to operate in a second stage which is after ~~rewriting~~ operation is performed by said preliminary processor means;

selection means for selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using ~~said~~ the touch panel;

background image display means for displaying on the display screen a background image corresponding to the pattern selected by said selection means and storing, in a predetermined storage, the background image as one of a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order;

input means for inputting, by using the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on print paper under the operation of the OS, each of ~~said~~ the plurality of character strings being assigned to ~~each~~ a respective one of ~~[[a]]~~ the plurality of logical layers ~~which overlay each other in a fixed order;~~

control means for generating ~~[[bit]]~~ sets of bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in ~~[[a]]~~ the predetermined storage, each time a character string is inputted by said input means;

layout means for laying out each set of the stored ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in accordance with ~~said~~ the fixed order;

generating means for generating an image data by overlaying each of the image data obtained by said layout means on the background image;

edit means for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using the touch panel with regard to the image data obtained by said generating means, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with the fixed order;

and

output means for, when an output instruction is inputted by using the touch panel, outputting image data, obtained by said generating means or said edit means, to printing means.

28. (currently amended) A sticker printing apparatus for printing a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid onto a display screen, comprising:

start-up means for initiating start-up operation from a read-only storage medium, storing an operating system (OS) and ~~said~~ an application program in a directly executable form;

preliminary processor means for copying data, which is stored in ~~from~~ the storage medium, ~~the data~~ and is subject[[ed]] to being written ~~in a secondary volatile storage~~ at least while the OS and the application program are operating, ~~said~~ to secondary volatile storage means that have a file system and are ~~being~~ accessible by a CPU in a first stage ~~of start-up and having a file system~~;

means for initiating the OS to operate in a second stage which is after ~~copying~~ operation is performed by said preliminary processor means;

selection means for selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using ~~said~~ the touch panel;

background image display means for displaying on the display screen a background image corresponding to the pattern selected by said selection means and storing, in a predetermined storage, the background image as one of a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order;

input means for inputting, by using the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on a sticker under the operation of the OS, each of said plurality of

character strings being assigned to ~~each~~ a respective one of ~~[[a]]~~ the plurality of logical layers ~~which overlay each other in a fixed order;~~

control means for generating ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in ~~[[a]]~~ the predetermined storage, each time a character string is inputted by said input means;

layout means for laying out each of the stored ~~[[bit]]~~ bitmap image data in accordance with said fixed order;

generating means for generating an image data by overlaying each of the image data obtained by said layout means on the background image;

edit means for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using the touch panel with regard to the image data obtained by said generating means, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with said fixed order; and

output means for, when an output instruction is inputted by using the touch panel, outputting image data, obtained by said generating means or said edit means, to printing means.

29. to 31. (canceled).

32. (currently amended) The apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein ~~each of the~~ sets of image data obtained by said layout means are each arranged at predetermined fixed positions on the background image.

33. (currently amended) The apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein ~~each of the sets of~~ image data obtained by said layout means are each arranged at predetermined fixed positions on the background image.

34. (currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said storage medium storing the OS is a removable read-only medium and said secondary volatile storage means is a RAM disk generated from a part of a main memory,

and the apparatus has a drive for driving the removable read-only medium ~~and the secondary volatile storage means~~, and does not have a non-volatile writable storage,

wherein the predetermined storage is allocated in said ~~secondary volatile storage means~~ main memory.

35. (currently amended) The apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein said storage medium storing the OS is a removable read-only medium, and

the apparatus has a drive for driving the removable read-only medium ~~and the secondary volatile storage means~~, and does not have a non-volatile writable storage,

wherein the predetermined storage is allocated in said ~~secondary volatile storage means~~ main memory.